

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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E O 11652: N/A
TAGS: AORG, WFC, UN, MX
SUBJECT: WORLD FOOD COUNCIL (WFC) FOURTH SESSION

1. FOURTH SESSION OPENED WITH MESSAGE FROM UN SECRETARY GENERAL KURT WALDHEIM (DELIVERED BY WFC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HANNA), AND STATEMENTS BY MEXICAN MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE MERINO RABAGO, WFC PRESIDENT TANCO, AND MEXICAN PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO.

2. AGRICULTURE MINISTER MERINO CLAIMED THAT PRESENT POLICIES SHOULD BE REVISED TO PERMIT LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES WITH SURPLUSES OF ARABLE LAND AND WATER TO PRODUCE FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY. HE STATED IT WAS QUOTE UNACCEPTABLE END QUOTE FOR COUNTRIES WITH PRODUCTION SURPLUSES TO WITHDRAW LAND FROM AGRICULTURE TO CONTROL PRICES. HE REFERRED TO NEED TO REDUCE ARMAMENTS TO FREE RESOURCES TO DEVELOPMENT. HE PRESENTED A LIST OF ACTIVITIES WHICH SHOULD RECEIVE GREATER INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING MEANS FOR INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CENTERS TO STRENGTHEN NATIONAL CENTERS, MONITORING AND CONTROLLING MOVEMENT OF PLANT MATERIALS THROUGH QUARANTINE CENTERS, FOOD LOSS REDUCTION,
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AND MACHINERY AND INPUTS PROVIDED THROUGH PREFERENTIAL PRICES AND SOFT CREDIT. FINALLY, HE CHARACTERIZED TERMS OF TRADE AS UNFAVORABLE CLAIMING GATT HAS NOT PRODUCED EXPECTED RESULTS, AND CITED NEED FOR RESERVE SYSTEM.

3. LOPEZ PORTILLO PRESENTED BRIEF STATEMENT STATING THAT INTERNATIONAL PRIORITIES DETERMINED BY PRESENCE OF SECRE-

TARY GENERAL, WHO EXPRESSED REGRET AT NOT COMING BECAUSE OF DISARMAMENT TALKS. HE VIEWED DISARMAMENT AS A PROBLEM OF FEAR AND POWER BETWEEN THE PRIVILEGED WHO HAVE ALL THEY NEED, WHILE OTHERS HAVE THE PROBLEM OF NOT ENOUGH TO EAT. FOOD PROBLEMS WERE NOT CAUSED BY A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE, BUT CONGRUENT ACTION. FINALLY, HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE WFC WOULD NOT BE A BODY WHICH WOULD MERELY CREATE AWARENESS OF THE FOOD PROBLEM, WHICH WAS ALREADY WELL KNOWN, BUT ALSO A BODY FOR DECISION-MAKING.

4. TANCO'S RELATIVELY WELL-BALANCED SPEECH WAS OVER-SHADOWED BY HIS ERROR IN REFERRING TO LOPEZ PORTILLO AS PRESIDENT OF THE QUOTE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA END QUOTE. HE ALSO EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE COUNCIL SHOULD BECOME A QUOTE MANAGER OF THE GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEM END QUOTE AND AN EFFECTIVE VEHICLE FOR PURSUIT OF SOLUTIONS.

5. FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL SAOUMA SENT A TERSE MESSAGE STAT-ING HE WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND BECAUSE HE WAS RECEIVING THE PRESIDENT OF GAMBIA FOR DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING THE SAHEL RELIEF EFFORT. SAOUMA APPARENTLY WANTED TO CONVEY THAT HE WAS ENGAGED IN ACTION ON FOOD PROBLEMS RATHER THAN MERE DISCUSSION. HIS MESSAGE CLEARLY UNDERSCORED THE GAP BETWEEN FAO AND WFC. LUCEY

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